

DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



BRIAN SCHWEITZER
GOVERNOR

JOAN MILES
DIRECTOR

STATE OF MONTANA

www.dphhs.mt.gov

Developmental Disabilities Program
2675 Palmer St., Suite B
Missoula, MT 59808
Phone: (406) 329-5415
FAX: 406-329-5490

DATE: September 11, 2008

TO: Vickie Poynter, CEO, Flathead Industries
Carol Dossett, Program Director, Little Bitterroot Services, Inc.

FROM: Paula Sherwood, Quality Improvement Specialist, DDP

RE: Quality Assurance Review, Fiscal Year 2009

Please find enclosed the Quality Assurance Review for Little Bitterroot Services, Inc. (LBSI), FY '09. Also enclosed is the Quality Assurance Observation Sheet written during this review. It was my extreme pleasure to carry out this review and I wish to thank LBSI clients and staff for the assistance and hospitality that has been extended to me. I look forward to our continued partnership in providing quality services to individuals with developmental disabilities.

cc: Jim Jacobs, LBSI Board Chairperson
Paula Tripp, Region V Manager, DDP
John Zeeck, Quality Assurance Specialist, DDP
Perry Jones, Waiver Specialist, DDP
Tim Plaska, Community Service Bureau Chief, DDP
LBSI Contract File

RECEIVED
SEP 22 2008
DPHHS-DSD

Scope of Review

This review period was from April, 2007 to August 2008.

General Areas

Little Bitterroot Services, Inc. (LBSI) provides residential and work/day services to thirty-one adults with developmental disabilities in Sanders County. LBSI operates one group home, two four-plex apartments and a mobile home for individuals in supported living. Some supported living recipients own or rent their own homes. LBSI also operates a day activity center, a used book store and a silk screening business which are all located in the same building along with the main offices in Plains. LBSI also has two thrift stores, one in Plains and the other in Thompson Falls. LBSI is also a Community Supports provider.

LBSI is a small agency whose staff go out of their way to meet the needs of individuals served. Because of the size of the town, LBSI staff have the opportunity to see individuals outside of work almost on a daily basis. The staff are to be commended on their commitment to those they work for and their diligence to ensure their safety. LBSI also has an emergency on-call system 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

A. ADMINISTRATIVE

Significant Events from the agency include:

LBSI started the College of Direct Support and staff have been current with their time lines for completion.

LBSI Administrative staff have attended the numerous trainings that have occurred throughout the past year for Personal Supports Planning, Individual Cost Plans, and other changes that have been mandated in the DDP system.

The Board of Directors has approved the expenditure for new flooring to be installed throughout the group home.

LBSI follows all DDP policies and DDP directives. The group home is currently licensed through October of 2008 and no problems were noted during the licensing. LBSI currently has a three year accreditation through CARF which is valid through January, 2009.

Agency internal communication systems include Therap for incident reports and T-Logs,

e-mail, routed posted memos, staff meetings and trainings.

LBSI was last audited by an independent auditor, Loren W. Randall, CPA, on 6/30/06. The results of the audit found LBSI to be within compliance of required applicable laws, regulations, contracts and grants.

LBSI has a very active Incident Management Committee (IMC) which meets weekly and includes the Region V Quality Improvement Specialist and ORI Case Managers. The agency adheres to the Incident Management Policy and all its requirements.

Specific Services Reviewed

B. RESIDENTIAL

LBSI's group home is spacious and attractive. Individual bedrooms are decorated with client's preferences and likes in the forefront. One bedroom is having its flooring replaced. The group home carpet needed to be replaced and LBSI's Board of Directors has already approved this expenditure. The group home staff and clients have been busy planting flowers and maintaining them throughout the summer in outside pots. There is a beautiful water fountain outside the front door. This not only has aesthetic purposes, but only provides needed sensory input for the individuals living there. LBSI also has two four-plex apartments and a mobile home for supported living recipients. The mobile home is attached to an office for Supported Living staff which is where program books and other confidential client information as well as medications are kept locked up. The apartments are accessible for individuals living there and have been decorated with individuals' tastes in mind. Individuals are extremely pleased with their lodgings.

i. HEALTH AND SAFETY

LBSI has a Safety Committee which is vigilant and proactive in overseeing any potential problems. Fire drills for the group home and supported living were carried out over the past year and were in good order. No problems were noted for fire drills or other emergency drills practiced. Fire extinguishers were in place and all are checked on a routing basis. Service checks were up to date. Water temperatures were less than 120 degrees Fahrenheit at the group home as well as supported living sites visited.

Medications are locked in a cabinet in the group home office and the office door is also kept locked. Individuals have protocols in

place specific to their needs, such as medication administration, eating, and bathing. Staff are trained on these protocols and documentation is kept on such trainings.

General medical care is provided in Plains and there is access for emergency medical situations. For specialized medical services, individuals are transported to LBSI staff to surrounding towns such as Kalispell and Missoula. LBSI is to be commended for seeking outside medical care when it is not available in the immediate area.

ii. SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY

LBSI had not yet started Personal Supports Planning during the period of this review. One Individual Plan (IP) was reviewed from the group home and one IP was reviewed from Supported Living Services. Programs and strategies for both were implemented according to the IP time lines and documentation was current and adhered to schedule. It is suggested that one of the programs written for the individual living in the group home be modified to include more positive proactive strategies which would include a toileting schedule, reinforcement for when the individual uses the bathroom, environmental strategies to ensure that piles of clothing and/or bedding are not left on the floor. This was discussed with the Group Home Manager as well as the Program Director during the course of the review. See QAOS 1A.

The IP from the Supported Living site was found to be in good order and was shared and explained to this reviewer by the individuals receiving services herself. She was extremely proud that she is currently working on getting her driver's license. Quarterly reports are completed and submitted in a timely manner. Consumer surveys are completed for each annual IP. Consumers interviewed during this review are aware of their rights and who to notify should they feel they have been subjected to abuse, neglect or exploitation. They are very familiar with their case managers and do not hesitate to contact them regarding any problems they may be experiencing. They also notify staff in the chain of command if they have complaints.

Leisure activities are available for the individuals who live there. Service recipients are involved in their community and attend many community sponsored events, such as parades and the annual Plains Fair.

iii. STAFFING

All staff employed by LBSI are subject to background checks. These were found to be in place for all staff files reviewed. Staff go through a thorough orientation which includes abuse/neglect training. With the exception of newly hired employees, staff records indicated that all staff were current on medication certification, First Aid/CPR and Mandt training. They were also current on the required College of Direct Support modules. New hires were within the time lines for the required trainings.

The group home has one person who is staffed 1:1 during waking hours and there are at least 2 other staff during waking hours. The group home has two overnight awake staff.

Staffing ratios have always been adhered to upon site visits.

Staff surveys indicated good knowledge of mandatory reporting issues and DDP and agency policies.

iv. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

As stated before, LBSI's Incident Management Committee which meets weekly as per DDP policy. The committee is comprised of the Program Director, the Director of Operations, the Program Managers and the Habilitation Technician II. It is also attended by ORI Case Managers and the DDP Quality Improvement Specialist. Residential staff is knowledgeable about circumstances under which they are required to write incident reports and notification procedures.

C. WORK/DAY/COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT

LBSI has a Day Services/Activity Center which also houses the administrative offices. The building also contains a Screen Works business and a used book store. LBSI also

operates two thrift stores, one located in Plains and the other in Thompson Falls. Both thrift stores are clean and orderly. Individuals served know their jobs well and are very proud of their work and the stores. They were eager to share their various responsibilities and were conscientious of their customers. The used book store in Plains has recently undergone a thorough reorganizing with staff and clients working diligently, thus making it more appealing and organized shop for customers.

Several individuals also hold jobs in the community with local businesses. There also a few individuals who volunteer their time with various organizations such as the local Fire Department.

I. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Medications at Day Services are stored in a locked box in a back room. One staff is assigned the duty of medication assistance and supervision. In case of absence, then the Hab Tech II, the Director of Operations or the Program Director ensure that medications are received during Day Services hours. The Hab Tech II ensures that medications are supplied at the Thrift Stores on a weekly basis. These are also stored in locked boxes at each site. Individuals in community employment currently do not take any medications.

ii. SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY

Four IP's were reviewed under work/day/community employment services. These included one person from each thrift store, one person from the day center and one person with community employment. All were found to adhere to time lines and documentation was in place for all objectives. The plans were thorough and indicated respect for individuals' choices and preferences.

During day services hours, individuals often participate in community outings and community events. They also work on preferred activities and crafts.

Three service recipients were interviewed during this review. All were aware of their rights and how to report APS issues. They knew where the phone number was posted at certain sites. They also reported that they would tell their case manager(s) of any perceived wrong-doing.

Staff working with clients are to be commended for their interactions. They demonstrated emotionally responsible care giving practices and it was evident that they knew the clients well and were respectful of their needs.

iii. STAFFING

The staffing ratio for the Day Services and the Thrift Stores is 1:4. Site visits have always found the staffing ratio to be adequate. Furthermore, management staff are almost always on site at the main building should assistance be needed.

Three staff were interviewed under this category, one at each thrift store and one at the day services site. There were no problems noted for any of the surveys.

iv. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Refer to Incident Management under Residential Services.

D. COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

LBSI provides services to four individuals through the Community Supports Waiver. The service agreements range from day habilitation, residential habilitation, recreation, health and health maintenance and transportation. All IP's for these individuals have been reviewed throughout the year. IP implementation and documentation was reviewed for all of these individuals during this review. All were found to be in compliance with the IP and addressed individual needs and preferences for the service received.

i. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Refer to Health and Safety under above listed services.

ii. SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY

Refer to Service Planning and Delivery under above listed services.

iii. STAFFING

Refer to staffing under above listed services.

iv. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Refer to Incident Management under above listed services.

E. TRANSPORTATION

LBSI owns seven vehicles which include two cars, three minivans, a 15 passenger van and a bus which is wheelchair accessible. The agency provides transportation to and from work sites within Plains and to Thompson Falls. They also provide transportation to and from Noxon. The vehicles are also used to transport individuals to medical and all other auxiliary services within the area and to other towns. Vehicles are also used for recreational services. All staff driving are required to have a current driver's license and to complete a mandatory driving test. The vehicles are all serviced on a regular schedule and documentation of such is kept for each vehicle.